implementation of land reforms programmes are being reviewed from time to time at various fora including Chief Ministers/Revenue Ministers/ Revenue Secretaries Conferences. As per information received from the State Governments, an area of 53.94 lakh acres has been distributed to the rural landless poor which includes 50% of the area to Scheduled Castes/ Scheduled Tribe beneficiaries. Besides, Bhoodan land to the extent of 21.75 lakh acres and 147.47 lakh acres of Government Wastelands have also been distributed to eligible rural poor beneficiaries.

Review of anti-poverty programmes

†164. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether any review has been made in respect of the implementation of the various poverty alleviation programmes introduced in the country during the Ninth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government have worked out any new poverty alleviation programmes in various States during the Tenth Five Year Plan; if so, the details of the allotments made therefor for the ongoing financial year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M.K. PATIL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Ministry of Rural Development has established a comprehensive system for review and monitoring of Rural Development Programmes, including poverty alleviation programmes.The Programmes are being reviewed at the Central level by the Performance Review Committee. Four meetings of this Committee have so far been held.These reviews revealed that the progress of implementation of the schemes vary from State to State and the progress varies under different programmes even within a State. There is also need for continuous review of the programmes at periodic intervals in order to ensure that the benefits of the programmes reach the target groups and also to make mid-course corrections, if any, needed.

(c)The Sampoorna Gramin RozgarYojana (SGRY) has been launched with effect from 25th September, 2001 and has become fully operational

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

with effect from 1.4.2002. All States/UTs (except Delhi and Chandigarh) are covered. The major objective of the scheme is provision of wage employment in all rural areas and thereby provide food security and improve nutritional levels as well as creation of durable community, social and economic assets and infrastructure development in rural areas. For the scheme, an amount of Rs. 5040 crore has been allocated for the year 2002-03.

Cultivation of Barren-land

†165. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of vast areas of barran land in the country which could be made cultivable;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government propose to take any time-bound steps to make such area of land cultivable; and

(d) if so, the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ANNASAHEB M. K. PATIL): (a) to (d)The process of soil erosion and land degradation leading to degraded lands, including barren lands, occurs owing to faulty cultivation practices, under utilization of land resources, deterioration due to lack of appropriate soil and water management and natural and environmental causes.

As per the Wastelands Atlas of India, 2000 (brought out by the Department of Land Resources in collaboration with the National Remote Sensing Agency, Hyderabad employing Satellite Remote Sensing Technologies), the total extent of Wastelands/Degraded lands in the country is 63.85 million hectare, out of which the extent of barren rocky/stony waste/sheet rock area is 6.45 million hectare.The State-wise details are placed at Annexure. [See Appendix 198 Annexdure No. 1].

While no specific programme is currently under implementation to bring barren land under cultivation, the main Programmes and Schemes of the Central Government for the treatment of wastelands and degraded

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